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Isidorus, Saint, Bp. of Seville, d. 636.

THE LETTERS OF ST. ISIDORE OF SEVILLE

Translated from the Latin
with an introduction
by

GORDON B. FORD, JR.
Northwestern University

second, revised edition

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INTRODUCTION

Isidore of Seville was born about the year 560 A.D. He was the son of Severianus, who probably came from Cartagena. About 600 Isidore succeeded his older brother Leander as bishop of Seville and remained bishop until his death on 4 April 636. He presided over the Synod of Seville in 619 and the important Fourth Council of Toledo in 633.

Faustino Arévalo's edition of the *Epistolae* in J. P. Migne, *Patrologia Latina* 83, 893-914, was used for Letters I-XIII. Letter XIV was taken from W. M. Lindsay's edition of the *Etymologiae* (Oxford, 1911). Letters II, III, IX, X, XI, XII, XIII, and XIV in this translation correspond to Letters A, B, I, II, III, IV, V, and VI respectively in W. M. Lindsay's edition of the *Etymologiae.* Letter V: Isidore to Helladius and other Bishops was also edited by W. Gundlach in the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Epistolae* III (Berlin, 1892), p. 661. The *Letters* of St. Isidore have never before been translated in their entirety.

Letter I: Isidore to Bishop Leudefredus, Letter VI: Isidore to General Claudius, Letter VII: Isidore to Archdeacon Redemptus, and Letter VIII: Isidore to Bishop Eugenius are considered to be spurious by M. C. Diáz y Diáz, *Index Scriptorum Latinorum Medii Aevi Hispanorum* (Madrid, 1959), nos. 134, 453. The letter to Leudefredus was probably written in Spain in the eighth or ninth century. The letter to Claudius is of later date according to P. J. Mullins, *The Spiritual Life according to Isidore of Seville* (Washington, 1940), p. 19. The letter to Redemptus belongs to the twelfth century; see J. Geiselmann, *Die Abendmahlslehre an der Wende der christlichen Spätantike zum Frühmittelalter* (Munich, 1933), pp. 162-163. The letter to Eugenius, which was considered genuine by J. Madoz in the *Revista Española de Teología* II (1942), p. 240, was considered suspect even by Arévalo.

The fourteen letters include twelve by Isidore himself, five of which are to his closest friend, Bishop Braulio (II, III, IX, XI, XIII), and two from Bishop Braulio to Isidore (X, XII). Much of what little we know about Isidore's life comes from his correspondence with Braulio, which is also an extremely important source of information about the composition of the *Etymologies.* Letter XIV, the preface to the *Etymologies,* indicates that the

work was the product of many years of reading and was annotated with excerpts from previous writers. In Letter X we learn that the work was written at the request of Braulio, and Letter XIII informs us that Isidore sent Braulio the manuscript of the *Etymologies* for correcting. Charles H. Lynch in his important book, *Saint Braulio, Bishop of Saragossa (631-651): His Life and Writings* (The Catholic University of America Studies in Mediaeval History, New Series, Volume II, Washington, 1938), pp. 33-54, dates the correspondence between Isidore and Braulio as follows:

Letter 3	620
Letter 2	620-624
Letter 10	625
Letter 11	632
Letter 12	632
Letter 13	632
Letter 9	634-636

I am very grateful to the following reviewers of the first edition (Catania, 1966) for their helpful suggestions: Myra L. Uhlfelder in *The Classical World* LX (1966-1967), pp. 306-307; Karl Langosch in the *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* IV (1967), p. 277; Jacques Fontaine in *Latomus* XXVII (1968), pp. 453-454; R. Sánchez Redondo in *Emerita* XXXVI (1968), p. 191; and Paul Antin in the *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* XLVI (1968), p. 955.

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Clavis Patrum Latinorum^2 (Brugge/The Hague, 1961), nos. 1209, 1210, 1211, 1223, 1224.

EVANSTON, 15 JUNE 1969 GORDON B. FORD, JR.

LETTERS

SANCTI ISIDORI
HISPALENSIS EPISCOPI
EPISTOLÆ.

EPISTOLA PRIMA.
ISIDORI LEUDEFREDO EPISCOPO.

Domino meo Dei servo Leudefredo episcopo Isidorus.

1. Perlectis sanctitatis tuæ litteris, gavisus sum quod optatam salutem tuam earum relatu cognovi, de iis autem quæ in consequentibus insinuare eloquii tui sermo studuit, gratias ago Deo, quod sollicitudinem officii pastoralis impendis, et qualiter ecclesiastica officia ordinentur perquiris. Et licet omnia prudentiæ vestræ sint cognita, tamen quia affectu fraterno me consulis, ex parte qua valeo expediam, et de omnibus Ecclesiæ gradibus, quid ad quem pertineat eloquar.

2. Ad ostiarium namque pertinent claves ecclesiæ, ut claudat et aperiat templum Dei; et omnia quæ sunt intus extraque custodiat, fideles recipiat, excommunicatos et infideles rejiciat.

3. Ad acolythum pertinet præparatio luminariorum in sacrario, ipse cereum portat, ipse suggesta, pro Eucharistia subdiaconis calicem præparat.

4. Ad exorcistam pertinet exorcismos memoriter retinere, manus super energumenos et catechumenos exorcizandos imponere.

5. Ad psalmistam pertinet officium canendi, dicere benedictiones, psalmos, laudes, sacrificii responsoria, et quidquid pertinet ad cantandi peritiam.

6. Ad lectorem pertinet lectiones pronuntiare, et ea quæ prophetæ annuntiaverunt populis prædicare.

7. Ad subdiaconum pertinet calicem et patenam ad altarium Christi deferre, et Levitis tradere, eisque administrare; urceolum quoque, et aqua-

LETTER I

ISIDORE TO BISHOP LEUDEFREDUS

Isidore to Bishop Leudefredus, my lord and the servant of God.

1. Having read the letter of your Holiness, I rejoiced that I learned of your desired good health in its report. Concerning those things which the language of your letter desired me to make known in a reply, I give thanks to God because you show concern for pastoral office and ask how ecclesiastical offices are ordained. And although all is known by your wisdom, yet because you consult me with fraternal affection, I shall set them forth as much as I can, and concerning all ranks of the Church, I shall express what pertains to each.

2. To the sexton belong the keys of the church so that he may close and open the temple of God and may protect everything which is inside and outside, may receive the faithful, and may reject the excommunicated and the unfaithful.

3. To the acolyte belongs the preparation of the candles in the sanctuary; he carries the wax, he prepares the platforms and the wine-cup of the subdeacon for the Eucharist.

4. To the exorcist belong the retaining in memory of exorcisms and placing the hands over men possessed of the devil and catechumens to be exorcized.

5. To the psalmist belongs the duty of singing, saying blessings, psalms, praises, the responses of the Eucharist, and whatever pertains to the skill of singing.

6. To the reader belong the reading of Scriptures and the preaching to the people of those things which the prophets declared.

7. To the subdeacon belongs the duty of carrying the wine-cup and bowl to the altar of Christ and giving them to the deacons and assisting them; also holding the pitcher and wash-basin and towel and providing water

manilem, et manutergium tenere, et episcopo, et presbyteris, et Levitis pro lavandis ante altarium manibus aquam præbere.

8. Ad diaconum pertinet assistere sacerdotibus, et ministrare in omnibus quæ aguntur in sacramentis Christi, in baptismo scilicet, in chrismate, in patena et calice; oblationes inferre, et disponere in altario, componere mensam Domini, atque vestire, crucem ferre, prædicare Evangelium et Apostolum. Nam sicut lectoribus Vetus Testamentum, ita diaconibus Novum prædicare præceptum est; ad ipsum quoque pertinet officium precum, recitatio nominum; ipse præmonet aures ad Dominum habere, ipse hortatur clamore, pacem ipse annuntiat.

9. Ad presbyterum pertinet sacramentum corporis et sanguinis Domini in altari Domini conficere, orationes dicere, et benedicere populum.

10. Ad episcopum pertinet basilicarum consecratio, unctio altaris, confectio chrismatis, ipse prædicta officia et ordines ecclesiasticos constituit, ipse sacras virgines benedicit; et dum præsit unusquisque in singulis, hic tamen est in cunctis. Hi sunt ordines et ministeria clericorum, quæ tamen auctoritate pontificali in archidiaconi cura, et primicerii, ac thesaurarii sollicitudine dividuntur.

11. Archidiaconus enim imperat subdiaconibus et Levitis, ad quem ista ministeria pertinent: ordinatio vestiendi altaris a Levitis, cura incensi, et sacrificii deferendi ad altare, cura subdiaconorum de subinferendis ad altare in sacrificio necessariis, sollicitudo quis Levitarum Apostolum et Evangelium legat, quis preces dicat, seu responsorium in Dominicis diebus, aut solemnitatum. Sollicitudo quoque parochitanorum, et ordinatio, et jurgia ad ejus pertinent curam; pro reparandis diœcesanis basilicis ipse suggerit sacerdoti; ipse inquirit parochias cum jussione episcopi, et ornamenta, vel res basilicarum parochitanarum, gesta libertatum ecclesiasticarum episcopo idem defert.

12. Collectam pecuniam de communione ipse accipit, et episcopo ipse defert, et clericis partes proprias ipse distribuit. Ab archidiacono nuntiantur episcopo excessus diaconorum; ipse denuntiat sacerdoti in sacrario jejuniorum dies, atque solemnitatum; ab ipso publice in ecclesia prædicantur. Quando autem archidiaconus absens est, vicem ejus diaconus sequens adimplet.

to the bishop and presbyters and deacons for washing their hands before the altar.

8. To the deacon belongs the duty of assisting the priests and assisting in everything which is done in the sacraments of Christ, that is, in baptism, in the anointing, in the bowl and wine-cup; bringing in offerings and placing them on the altar, prepering and covering the table of the Lord, bearing the cross, preaching the Gospel and the Apostle Paul. For just as it is prescribed to the readers to preach the Old Testament, so it is prescribed to the deacons to preach the New Testament: to him also belong the duty of prayers, the recitation of names; he advises people to have ears for the Lord; he exorts by shouting; he preaches peace.

9. To the presbyter belong the performance of the sacrament of the body and the blood of the Lord at the altar of the Lord, saying prayers, and blessing the people.

10. To the bishop belong the consecration of churches, the anointing of the altar, the performance of the anointing. He establishes the aforesaid duties and ecclesiastical orders; he blesses the sacred virgins; and whereas each one is present in individual duties, he is present in all of them. These are the orders and the duties of the clerics, which are divided by episcopal authority among the archdeacon and the secretary and the treasurer.

11. For the subdeacons and deacons are under the authority of the archdeacon, to whom the following duties belong: the responsibility for the covering of the altar by the deacons, the care of bringing incense and the Eucharist to the altar, the care of the subdeacons in bringing to the altar those things which are necessary in the Eucharist, the care as to who of the deacons is to read the Apostle and Gospel, recite prayers or the response on Sundays or on holidays. Also the concern and responsibility for parishioners and the settlement of disputes belong to his care; he gives suggestions to the priest for repairing the churches of the diocese; he inspects the parishes at the order of the bishop and defers to the bishop the decorations or property of the churches of the parish and matters of ecclesiastical liberties.

12. He receives the money collected from the congregation and gives it to the bishop and distributes to the clerics their own shares. Excesses of deacons are reported to the bishop by the archdeacon; he tells the priest in the sanctuary the days of fasting and the holidays; they are publicly announced by him in church. When the archdeacon is away, the next deacon fills his place.

13. Ad primicerium pertinent acolythi, et exorcistæ, psalmistæ, atque lectores, signum quoque dandum pro officio clericorum, pro vitæ honestate, et officium meditandi, et peragendi sollicitudo. Lectiones, benedictiones, psalmum, laudes, offertorium, et responsoria quis clericorum dicere debeat; ordo quoque et modus psallendi in choro pro solemnitate et tempore; ordinatio pro luminariis deportandis; si quid etiam necessarium pro reparatione basilicarum, quæ sunt in urbe, ipse denuntiat sacerdoti; epistolas episcopi pro diebus jejuniorum parochitanis per ostiarios iste dirigit; clericos quos delinquere cognoscit iste distringit: quos vero emendare non valet, corum excesssus ad agnitionem episcopi defert. Basilicarios ipse constituit, et matriculas ipse disponit. Quando autem primicerius absens est, ea, quæ prædicta sunt, ille exsequitur, qui ei aut loco est proximus, aut eruditione in his expediendis intentus.

14. Ad thesaurarium pertinet basilicarii et ostiarii ordinatio, incensi cura, chrismatis cura conficiendi, baptisterii ordinandi, præparatio sacrificii de his quæ immolanda sunt; ad eum venient de parochiis pro chrismate; cereos et oblationes altaris ipse accipit a populo; ipse colligit per ecclesias cereos in festivitatibus. Ad eum pertinent ornamenta, et vestimenta altaris, quidquid in usu templi est, sub ejus ordinatione existit, vela et ornamenta basilicarum quæ in urbe sunt, et non habent presbyterum, ipse custodit. De candelis autem et cereolis quotidianis quidquid superest in basilicis, basilicarius per singulos menses huic deportat. Ex quibus thesaurarius dat quartam basilicario, tres reliquas partes divident æqualiter sibi cum primicerio et presbytero, qui missam celebrat in eamdem basilicam.

15. Ad œconomum pertinet reparatio basilicarum, atque constructio, actiones ecclesiæ in judiciis vel in proferendo, vel in respondendo, tributi quoque acceptio, et rationes eorum quæ inferuntur. Cura agrorum et culturæ vinearum, causæ possessionum, et servitialium stipendia clericorum, viduarum, et devotarum pauperum; dispensatio vestimenti, et victus domesticorum clericorum, servitialium quoque, et artificum, quæ omnia cum jussu et arbitrio sui episcopi ab eo implentur.

16. Hæc sunt quæ vel a majoribus per officiorum ordines distributa sunt,

13. To the secretary belong the responsibility for the acolytes and exorcists, psalmists, and readers, also the giving of the sign of the Cross for the office of the clerics and for honesty of life; the duty of meditating and the care of acting; the care as to who of the clerics should recite Scriptures, blessings, psalms, praises, the offertory, and responses; also the order and way of chanting in the choir in accordance with the solemnity and the time; the responsibility for carrying the candles; also he reports to the priest whatever is necessary for the repair of the churches which are in the city; he sends through the sextons letters of the bishop for the days of fasting of the parish; he punishes the clerics who he knows are delinquent; but he brings the excesses of those whom he cannot correct to the attention of the bishop. He appoints the custodians and is in charge of the registers. When the secretary is away, he who is closest to him in rank or is skilled by erudition in accomplishing these things performs the above-mentioned duties.

14. To the treasurer belong the responsibility for the custodian and the sexton, the care of incense, the care of consecrating the sacrament of the anointing, the care of arranging the baptistery, the preparation of the Eucharist from what is to be offered; it will come to him from the parishes for the anointing; he receives wax tapers and the offerings of the altar from the people; he gathers wax tapers through the churches on days of festivals. To him pertain the decorations and vestiments of the altar; whatever is used by the church is under his authority; he has custody of the coverings and decorations of the churches which are in the city and do not have a presbyter. The custodian brings to him each month what is left over from the candles and daily candlesticks in the churches. The treasurer gives a fourth to the custodian, the three remaining parts are divided equally with the secretary and the presbyter, who celebrates the mass in the same church.

15. To the steward belong the repair and construction of the churches, actions of the church both in initiating and in answering lawsuits, also the receipt of tribute, and accounts of those things which are brought in; the care of fields and the cultivation of vineyards; matters concerning property and the salaries of clerics who are servants, of widows, and of poor devout women; the distribution of clothing and of food for domestic clerics and also for clerics who are servants and craftsmen, all of which things are accomplished by him at the order and decision of his bishop.

16. These are the things which are assigned by the elders among the

vel consuetudine ecclesiarum in unumquemque servata. Nec aliquid ex his nostri judicii deputes, nisi quod aut ratio docuit, aut vetustatis antiquitas sanxit.

17. Patrem autem monasterii, unde innotuistis, illum præferri oportet, quem sancta vita et probitas morum commendat, quique dum subjectus exstitit, fraus in illo non fuit. Huic juste gratia cumulatur, dicente Domino: *Quia in pauca fuisti fidelis, in multa te constituam (Matth.* xxv, 21). Qui vero adhuc sub regimine positus improbe vixit, et fratribus fraudem facere non pertimuit, hic prælatus licenter ac libere majora et deteriora committet, dum se in potestate et libertate aspexerit.

18. De talibus enim dicit Apostolus: *Sed vos injuriam facitis, et hoc fratribus. An nescitis quia iniqui regnum Dei non possidebunt (I Cor.* vi, 8)? Sed nobis ista sufficiat dicere tibi, quod Deo dignum existimas adimple. Post hæc autem precari tuam sanctitatem non desino, ut pro me intercessor apud Dominum existas, ut, quia meo vitio lapsus sum, per te remissionem consequar peccatorum.

ranks of offices or are preserved for each one by the custom of churches. You should not think that any of them results from our decision unless either reason taught it or the antiquity of age sanctioned it.

17. But it is fitting that he whom a holy life and goodness of character commend, in whom there was no deceit when he was under authority, be preferred as the father of the monastery, from which you became known. On him is grace justly heaped, for the Lord says: «Because you have been faithful over a few things, I shall make you ruler over many things.» (Matthew 25, 21). But a prelate who lived evilly, when still placed under authority, and was not afraid to be deceitful to his brothers, will commit greater and worse things willingly and freely when he beholds himself in power and liberty.

18. For the Apostle says about such persons: «But you do harm even to your brothers. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not possess the kingdom of God?» (I Corinthians 6, 8). But let it be sufficient for me to say this to you: perform what you think is worthy of God. After this I do not cease to pray to your Sanctity that you may be an intercessor with the Lord for me so that I may obtain through you remission of my sins because I have slipped on account of my vice.

EPISTOLA II.

ISIDORI BRAULIONI ARCHIDIACONO.

In Christo charissimo, et dilectissimo filio, Braulioni archidiacono, Isidorus.

1. Dum amici litteras, charissime fili, suscipis, eas pro amico amplecti non moreris. Ipsa est enim secunda inter absentes consolatio, ut si non est præsens qui diligitur, pro eo litteræ amplexentur. Direximus tibi annulum propter nostrum animum, et pallium pro amicitiarum nostrarum amictu, unde antiquitas hoc traxit vocabulum. Ora igitur pro me, inspiret tibi Dominus ut merear adhuc in vita videre te. Et quem mœstificasti abeundo, aliquando iterum lætifices te præsentando. Quaternionem regularum per Maurentionem primicerium direximus. De cætero autem opto tuam semper cognoscere salutem, dilectissime mi domine, et charissime fili.

LETTER II

ISIDORE TO ARCHDEACON BRAULIO

Isidore to Archdeacon Braulio, dearest and most beloved son in Christ.

1. When you receive a letter of a friend, dearest son, you should not delay to embrace it as a friend. For it is a fine consolation among the absent that if one who is loved is not present, a letter may be embraced instead. I sent you a ring on account of my love and a cloak as a cover of our friendship, from which word for cloak (*amictus*) the ancients derived the word for friendship (*amicitia*). Therefore, pray for me. May the Lord inspire you so that I may deserve to see you again in my lifetime. May you some day make happy again by your presence one whom you made sad by your departure. I sent you by Maurentio, my chief secretary, a quire of rules. Moreover, I desire always to know of your health, my most beloved lord and dearest son.

EPISTOLA III.

ISIDORI BRAULIONI ARCHIDIACONO.

In Christo charissimo et dilectissimo fratri Braulioni archidiacono Isidorus.

1. Quia non valeo te frui oculis carnis, perfruar saltem alloquiis, ut ipsa amici sit consolatio incolumem litteris cognoscere quem cupio videre. Utrumque bonum esset, si liceret; sed vel mente de te reficiar, si corporali obtutu non valeo. Dum pariter essemus, postulavi te, ut mihi decadem sextam sancti Augustini transmitteres; posco ut quoquomodo me cognitum ei facias.

2. Misimus vobis Synonymorum libellum, non pro id quod alicujus utilitatis sit, sed quia eum volueras. Commendo autem hunc puerum, commendo et memetipsum, ut ores pro me misero, quia valde langueo et infirmitatibus carnis, et culpa mentis. In utroque tuum præsidium posco, quia per me nihil mereor; de cætero peto ut dum vita comite portitori ad nos regredi fuerit opportunitas, vestris nos jubeatis lætificare eloquiis.

LETTER III

ISIDORE TO ARCHDEACON BRAULIO

Isidore to Archdeacon Braulio, dearest and most beloved brother in Christ.

1. Because I cannot enjoy your presence with my eyes in the flesh, may I at least enjoy your letters so that it may be a consolation of a friend to learn through a letter that the one whom I want to see is well. Both would be good if it were permitted; but may I be refreshed by you in mind if I cannot have the sight of your person. When we were together, I asked you to send me the sixth decad of St. Augustine. I ask that in some way you make me acquainted with him.

2. I sent you a book of synonyms, not because it may be of some use but because you wanted it. I commend, moreover, this boy and I commend myself, so that you may pray for me in my misery because I am very weak both with infirmities of the flesh and with fault of mind. In both I ask your protection because I deserve nothing on my own merits. Moreover, I ask that when there is an opportunity for a messenger to return to me in my lifetime, you may bid me to rejoice in your letter.

EPISTOLA IV.

ISIDORI MASSONÆ EPISCOPO.

Domino sancto meritisque beato Massonæ episcopo Isidorus.

1. Veniente ad nos famulo vestro viro religioso Nicetio, litteras honorificentiæ vestræ nobis detulit, in quibus agnitio salutis vestræ nihilominus perpatuit maxime per eum portitorem, cujus lingua epistola vivens erat. Unde pro salute vestra gratiarum actionibus Deo nostro repensis, in quantum valuit mediocritas nostra vice inquisitionis studio poscentes meritorum vestrorum suffragiis divinis vos commendare conspectibus.

2. Verum quod sequenter in epistolis venerabilis fraternitas vestra innotuit, nulla est in hujusmodi sententiis decretorum diversitas intelligenda, quod alibi legitur in lapsu corporali restaurandum honoris gradum post pœnitentiam, alibi, post hujusmodi delictum, nequaquam reparandum antiqui ordinis meritum.

3. Haec enim diversitas hoc modo distinguitur: illos enim ad pristinos officii gradus redire canon præcipit, quos pœnitentiæ præcessit satisfactio, vel digna peccatorum confessio; at contra ii qui neque a vitio corruptionis emendantur, atque hoc ipsum carnale delictum quod admittunt etiam vindicare quadam superstitiosa temeritate nituntur, nec gradum utique honoris, nec gratiam communionis recipiunt.

4. Ergo ita est utraque dirimenda sententia, ut necesse sit illos restaurari in locum honoris, qui per pœnitentiam reconciliationem meruerunt divinæ pietatis. Illi neque immerito consequuntur ademptæ dignitatis statum, qui per emendationem pœnitentiæ recepisse noscuntur vitæ remedium. Id enim, ne forte magis ambiguum sit, divinæ auctoritatis sententia confirmetur.

5. Ezechiel enim propheta sub typo prævaricatricis Jerusalem ostendit post pœnitentiæ satisfactionem pristinum posse restaurari honorem. *Confundite* (inquit), *o Juda, et porta ignominiam tuam.* Et post paululum. *Et tu,* inquit, *et filiæ tuæ revertimini ad antiquitatem vestram (Ezech.* xvi, 52). Quod dixit, *confundere,* ostendit post confusionem, id est, peccati opus, debere quemque

LETTER IV

ISIDORE TO BISHOP MASSONA

Isidore to Bishop Massona, a holy lord blessed in merits.

1. When your servant Nicetius, a religious man, came to me, he brought to me the letter of your honor, in which the knowledge of your health was especially clear through that messenger, in whose speech the letter was living. Whence acts of thanks are repaid to our God for your health to the extent that our mediocrity could by reason of approval of your merits commend to divine sight you who ask me questions with eagerness of inquiry.

2. But concerning what your venerable fraternity made known in the letter, no difference of decrees should be understood in judgments of this kind, because somewhere it is said that the rank of honor should be restored in a lapse of the body after penitence, whereas elsewhere it is said that the merit of old rank should by no means be restored after a sin of this kind.

3. For this difference is determined in this way: the canon bids those whom the satisfaction of penitence or worthy confession of sins preceded to return to the old ranks of office; but on the other hand, those who are not corrected from the vice of corruption and strive with some superstitious temerity even to defend this very carnal sin which they admit, receive neither a rank of honor nor the grace of communion.

4. Therefore, each judgment should so be separated that it be necessary for those to be restored to a place of honor who through repentance have deserved the reconciliation of divine piety. Those who are known to have obtained the improvement of their lives through the correction of repentance do not undeservedly obtain the status of their deprived dignity. Let this be confirmed by the judgment of divine authority lest by chance it be more uncertain.

5. For the prophet Ezekiel with the example of Jerusalem as a sinner pointed out that its old honor could be restored after the satisfaction of penitence: «Be confounded,» he said, «O Juda, and bear your shame.» And a little afterward he said: «You and your daughters return to your former estate» (Ezekiel 16, 52). What he said, «be confounded,» indicates that after

erubescere, et pro admissis sceleribus verecundam frontem humi prostratam demergere, pro eo quod dignum confusionis perpetraverit opus.

6. Deinde præcipit ut portet ignominiam, id est, dehonorationem nominis, sive dignitatis, et revertatur ad antiquitatem suam. Ergo dum quisque post opera confusionis suæ confunditur, atque ignominiam depositionis suæ cum humilitate portaverit, revocari secundum prophetam ad priorem statum poterit. Item Joannes evangelista angelo Ephesi Ecclesiæ inter cætera simile quiddam scribit: *Memor esto unde cecideris, et age pœnitentiam, et prima opera tua fac, alioquin veniam tibi, et movebo candelabrum tuum de loco suo* (*Apoc.* ii, 5).

7. In angelo Ecclesiæ præpositum utique, id est, sacerdotem ostendit, juxta Malachiam, qui dicit: *Labia sacerdotis custodiunt scientiam, et lex requiritur ex ore ejus, quia angelus Domini exercituum est* (*Malach.* ii, 7). Præpositus ergo lapsus in vitium per evangelistam monetur, ut memor sit unde ceciderit, et agat pœnitentiam, et prima opera faciat, ut non moveatur candelabrum ejus.

8. Nam candelabrum doctrina sacerdotalis, vel honor potestatis, quem gestat, intelligitur, juxta quod scriptum est apud Samuelem in damnationem Heli: *Oculi ejus caligaverant, nec poterant videre lucernam Dei, antequam exstingueretur* (*I Reg.* iii, 2); lucerna quippe Dei fuerat, quod dignitate sacerdotali pollens, justitiæ claritate fulgebat; exstinctam propheta asserit, dum ob scelera filiorum sacerdotii potestatem meritorumque lumen amisit. Candelabrum ergo, sive lucerna sacerdotis (quæ intelliguntur charismata honoris) tunc penitus juxta Joannem exstinguitur, vel movetur, quando post delicti casum, neglecta pœnitentia, admissa scelera non deflentur.

9. Non enim dicit: *Pro eo quod cecidisti, commovebo candelabrum tuum;* sed, *nisi pœnitentiam egeris, movebo candelabrum tuum.* Ergo ad quemque præpositum peccantem, si prævenerit pœnitentia delicti, utique sequitur venia, et reparatio meriti. Et in Proverbiis scriptum est: *Qui abscondit scelera sua, non dirigetur; qui vero confessus fuerit, et dereliquerit ea, misericordiam consequetur* (*Proverb.* xxviii, 13).

shame, that is, after a deed of sin each one should blush and for sins which he has admitted cast a shameful face prostrate on the ground because he committed a deed worthy of shame.

6. Then he orders that one should bear his shame, that is, dishonor of his name or of his dignity, and return to his former estate. Therefore, when each one is ashamed after the deeds of his shame and bears the shame of his position with humility, he will be able to be recalled to his former estate knowledge, and the law is sought from his mouth because he is the angel of the church of Ephesus a certain simile among other things: «Be mindful whence you have fallen and be repentant and do your first works; otherwise I shall come to you and shall move your candlestick from its place» (Revelation 2, 5).

7. By the angel he is referring to the head of the church, that is, the priest, in accordance with Malachi, who says: «The lips of the priest preserve knowledge, and the law is sought from his mouth because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts» (Malachi 2, 7). Thus a priest who has fallen into vice is warned by the evangelist so that he may be mindful of whence he has fallen and be repentant and do the first works so that his candlestick may not be moved.

8. For by the candlestick is meant the doctrine of the priest or the honor of the power which he bears, according to what is written in Samuel in condemnation of Eli: «His eyes had grown dim and could not see the lamp of God before it was extinguished» (I Samuel 3, 2); it was the lamp of God because strong with priestly dignity, it shone with the clarity of justice; the prophet asserts that it was extinguished when he lost the power of the priesthood and the light of his merits on account of the sins of his sons. Thus the candlestick or lamp of the priest (which are considered divine gifts of honor) is completely extinguished according to John or moved when after the lapse into sin repentance is neglected and the admitted sins are not lamented.

9. For he does not say: «Because you fell I shall move your candlestick,» but «unless you are repentant, I shall move your candlestick.» Thus if repentance of the sin comes to each sinning priest, then pardon and restoration of merit follow. And it is written in Proverbs: «He who covers his sins shall not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them shall obtain mercy» (Proverbs 28, 13).

10. Nam et ipsum, quod canonum censura post septem annos remeare pœnitentem in statum pristinum præcipit, non ex electione proprii arbitrii sancti Patres, sed potius ex sententia divini judicii sanxerunt. Nam legitur quod Maria soror Moysi prophetissa, dum obtrectationis adversus Moysen incurrisset delictum, illico stigmate lepræ perfusa est; cumque peteret Moyses ut emundaretur, præcepit eam Deus extra castra septem diebus egredi, atque post emendationem rursus eam in castra admitti (*Num.* xii).

11. Maria ergo, soror Aaron, caro intelligitur sacerdotis, quæ dum superbiæ dedita, sordidissimis corruptionum contagiis maculatur, extra castra septem diebus, id est, extra collegium sanctæe Ecclesiæ septem annis projicitur, qui post emundationem vitiorum loci, sive pristinæ dignitatis recipit meritum.

12. Ecce in quantum valui, concilii Ancyritani antiquam et plenam auctoritate sententiam sacris testimoniis plane explanavi, ostendens eum posse restaurari in proprio honore, qui per pœnitentiæ satisfactionem novit propria delicta deflere: qui vero neque luget quæ gessit, sed lugenda sine ullo pudore religionis, vel timore judicii divini committit, eum nullo modo posse ad pristinum gradum restaurari.

13. In finem autem epistolæ hujus hoc adjiciendum putavi, ut quotiescunque in gestis conciliorum discors sententia invenitur, illius concilii magis teneatur sententia, cujus antiquior aut potior exstat auctoritas. Datum pridie Kal. Mart., anno tertio regni domini nostri gloriosissimi Witerici regis.

10. For the holy fathers, not from the choice of their own judgment, but rather from the decision of divine judgment, consecrated him because the decree of the canons prescribes that the repentant man return to his former estate after seven years. For it is written that the prophetess Maria, the sister of Moses, when she committed the crime of detraction against Moses, was inflicted with the stigma of leprosy; and when Moses asked that she be purified, God ordered her to go outside the camp for seven days and ordered that she be admitted to the camp again after correction (Numbers 12).

11. Thus Maria, the sister of Aaron, is considered the flesh of a priest. When, given to pride, she is stained with the most sordid contagion of corruption, she is cast outside the camp for seven days, that is, outside the body of the Holy Church for seven years. After the purification of his vices the priest receives the merit of his rank or of his former dignity.

12. I have, then, insofar as I could, fully explained by holy testimony the old and authoritative opinion of the council of Ancyra, showing that he who through the satisfaction of repentance knows how to lament his own sins can be restored to his own honor; but he who does not lament what he has committed but commits grievous things without any reverence for religion or fear of divine judgment cannot be restored to his former estate in any way.

13. But at the end of this letter I thought that I should add that as often as a discordant decision is found in the acts of councils, the opinion of that council should be held whose authority is older or stronger. Written on the last day of February in the third year of the reign of our most glorious lord, King Witteric.

EPISTOLA V.

ISIDORI HELLADIO ALIISQUE EPISCOPIS.

Dominis meis et Dei servis Helladio cæterisque qui cum eo sunt coadunati episcopis Isidorus.

1. Afficimur lacrymis, compungimur stimulis peccatorum nostrorum, cum ruinam fratris agnoscimus, quia sicut de salute lætitia, ita de periculo animæ gemitus est. Cognovimus enim Hispalensem Cordubensis ecclesiæ sacerdotem in pontificali culmine carnali labe dilapsum, et de altitudine honoris in profundo flagitiorum flenda ruina demersum; et quia vobis sollicitudo pastoralis incumbit, vestroque judicio delinquentium errores discutiendos censura divina disposuit, dicens: *Sacerdotes stabunt in judiciis meis, et judicabunt inter sanctum et pollutum* (*Ezech.* XLIV, 24), hanc igitur vocem Domini cognoscentes, cum effusione lacrymarum vestram sanctitatem deposcimus, ut idem lapsus sancto cœtui vestro præsentatus, agnito a vobis confessionis eloquio, synodali sententia a gradu sacerdotii deponatur.

2. Melius est illi ut temporaliter judicetur a vobis, quam æterno damnetur judicio. Levior est illi præsentis temporis ignominia, quam futura gehennæ tormenta. Sciat enim se amisisse nomen, et officium sacerdotis, qui meritum perdidit sanctitatis. Quapropter judicii vestri decreto pœnitentiæ perpetim flagitia perpetrata lamentatione deploret; plangat sacerdotii cultum, quem male vivendo perdidit; lugeat animæ suæ statum, quem tanto putredinis cœno coinquinavit; fortasse porriget illi manum quandoque Spiritus sanctus, ut per dignam satisfactionem mereatur peccatorum remissionem. Pro me quoque deprecor, sanctissimi sacerdotes, ut pietatem divinam exorare dignemini, ut immemor malorum meorum, quibus et ipse collapsus sum, a peccatorum vinculo, quibus huc usque sum colligatus, dissolvat, et fructum indulgentiæ vestris meritis tribuat.

LETTER V

ISIDORE TO HELLADIUS AND OTHER BISHOPS

Isidore to Helladius and all other bishops who are united with him, my lords and the servants of God.

1. I am moved to tears, I am struck with the goads of my sins when I see the ruin of a brother, because just as there is joy for salvation of the soul, so there is lamentation for danger to it. For I know that the priest of Seville of the church of Cordova at the episcopal summit slipped with a carnal sin and submerged from a height of honor to the depth of sins with mournful ruin; and because the pastoral care falls on you, and a divine decree ordained that the errors of those delinquent should be punished with your judgment, saying: «Priests will stand in my judgments and will judge between the holy and profane» (Ezekiel 44, 24); thus recognizing this voice of the Lord, with a shedding of tears, I ask your Holiness that the same sinner be presented to your holy company, that the speech of confession be acknowledged by you, and that he be deposed from the rank of priesthood by synodal opinion.

2. It is better for him that he be judged temporally by you than be condemned to eternal judgment. Easier for him are the ignominies of the present time than the future torments of hell. For let him who has lost the merit of sanctity know that he has lost the name and office of a priest. Therefore, by a decree of your judgment, let him forever deplore with the lamentation of repentance the sins he has committed, let him mourn the honor of the priesthood which he has lost by living evilly; let him mourn the condition of his soul which he defiled with such filth of putridity; perhaps the Holy Spirit shall extend to him a hand some time so that he may obtain remission of sins through worthy satisfaction. I pray for myself also, most holy priests, that you deign to beseech divine piety that it, unmindful of my evil deeds with which I also have slipped, free me from the chain of sins to which I have been tied up to now and grant me the fruit of indulgence by reason of your merits.

EPISTOLA VI.

ISIDORI CLAUDIO DUCI.

Dilecto in Christo filio Claudio duci Isidorus.

1. Catholicæ strenuitatis tuæ suscipiens schedulas, Domini nostri Jesu Christi omnipotentiam collaudamus, qui de prosperis tuis successibus et triumphis Ecclesiæ sanctæ suæ misericorditer in præsenti de inimicis triumphare largitur. Te quidem me piis urgente petitionibus, tuis inquisitionibus respondere, lætor in Domino, quia ea quæ sunt de fide catholica, sollicite perquiris. Ad id ergo quod objecisti primo, prætermissis plurimis rationibus, tibi rationabiliter ac simpliciter respondemus.

2. Sic nos scimus præesse Ecclesiæ Christi, quatenus Romano pontifici reverenter, humiliter et devote, tanquam Dei vicario, præ cæteris Ecclesiæ prælatis specialius nos fateamur debitam in omnibus obedientiam exhibere. Contra quod quemquam procaciter venientem, tanquam hæreticum, a consortio fidelium omnino decernimus alienum. Hoc vero non ex electione proprii arbitrii, sed potius auctoritate Spiritus sancti habemus firmum, ratumque credimus, et tenemus.

3. Si vero (quod absit) infidelis sit non manifeste, in nullo læditur obedientia nostra, nisi præceperit contra fidem. Præterea pravis prælatis obediendum in jussionibus bonis Dominus præcipit, ubi dicit: *Quod dicunt, facite,* eorum prava opera præcipit evitanda, cum subjungit: *Quod autem faciunt, nolite facere* (*Matth.* xxiii, 3). In dubiis etiam præceptis, pravis prælatis obediendum est, quandiu eos Ecclecia toleraverit, nisi ex manifesta prælati infamatione in præcepto juste possit hæresis suspicio provenire. De similibus quoque illaqueationibus idem videtur. In præceptis manifeste malis nullatenus est obediendum, etiam bonis prælatis, quia quandoque Deus occultat majori quod revelat minori.

4. Item nobis insinuare curasti quorumdam Græcorum objectionem, quod in Nicæna vel Constantinopolitana synodo sub anathemate prohibitum legitur in Symbolo, et in illo sancti Athanasii de fide catholica diminuere vel addere

LETTER VI

ISIDORE TO GENERAL CLAUDIUS

Isidore to General Claudius, beloved son in Christ.

1. Receiving the letter of your Catholic strength, I praise the omnipotence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who through your prosperous successes and triumphs mercifully bestows upon his Holy Church the glory of triumphing over its enemies at the present time. When you urge me with pious requests to reply to your questions, I rejoice in the Lord because you eagerly inquire about that which pertains to the Catholic faith. Thus to that which you first mentioned, I shall reply rationally and simply to you, omitting many things.

2. Thus I know that I am at the head of the Church of Christ as long as I confess to show due obedience reverently, humbly, and devotedly in everything to the Roman pontiff in particular, as the vicar of God, before all other prelates of the Church. On the other hand, I decide that someone coming boldly as a heretic is completely foreign to the body of the faithful. I hold this belief firmly and consider it valid not from the choice of my own judgment but rather with the authority of the Holy Spirit.

3. But if (may it not be) he is not manifestly unfaithful, our obedience is harmed in no way unless he teaches against the faith. Besides, the Lord prescribes that bad prelates should be obeyed in good orders when he says: «Do what they say»; he orders that their bad works should be avoided when he adds: «But do not do what they do» (Matthew 23, 3). Bad prelates should also be obeyed in doubtful orders as long as the Church tolerates them unless a suspicion of heresy can justly result from the prelate's manifest defamation in his teaching. Concerning similar situations the same also appears true. In manifestly bad orders even good prelates should by no means be obeyed because God sometimes hides to the greater what he reveals to the lesser.

4. Likewise, you took care to make known to me the objection of some Greeks that in the synod of Nicea and Constantinople it is said that it was prohibited under pain of anathema in the Apostles' Creed and in that

aliquid; atque ideo quidam ex Græcis Latinos proterve nituntur reprehendere, quod in professione sanctæ fidei Deo corde et ore decantent: *Qui ex Patre Filioque procedit,* cum in prædictis conciliis fuerit positum *ex Patre procedit,* et sancta Romana Ecclesia ex Patre Filioque Spiritum sanctum procedere approbat atque credit.

5. Quæ supradicta prohibitio, si subtiliter et recte perspictur, omnis ambiguitas removetur; cum enim addere, seu diminuere prohibuit, de re contraria intellexit, cui sententiæ illud Apostoli congruit: *Si quis vobis aliud evangelizaverit, præter id quod accepistis a nobis, anathema sit* (*Galat.* i, 9). Et Joannes Apostolus ait: *Si quis venerit ad vos, aliam doctrinam afferens, non eum recipiatis, neque ei ave dixeritis* (*II Joan.* i, 10). Cum dixit aliam doctrinam, hæresim præcavendo, absque ambiguitate de doctrinæ contrarietate nobis voluit demonstrare.

6. Plura quidem alia prædicaverunt apostoli, martyres et Ecclesiæ orthodoxi doctores; sed quia non contraria, prohibitio apostolica hujusmodi non intelligitur contraire, eo quod sint ad unum veritatis finem tendentia. Cum ergo de similibus idem constet esse judicium, patet procul dubio prædictarum sententiarum prohibitiones de contrarietate hæreseum esse recipiendas.

7. Spiritum vero sanctum esse Patris, et Filii, et a Patre, et a Filio mitti, atque procedere ab utroque, sanctæ Scripturæ testimoniis clarius demonstremus. Apostoli verba sunt hæc: *Si spiritus ejus, qui suscitavit Jesum a mortuis, habitat in vobis,* et cætera (*Colos.* ii, 12). Et alibi: *Misit Deus Spiritum Filii sui in corda nostra* (*Galat.* iv, 6). Ecce manifeste patet apostolicis verbis Spiritum sanctum esse Dei Patris suscitantis a morte, et Dei Filii suscitati, qui non tres dii, sed unus est credendus, et adorandus, sicut Moyses testatur: *Audi,* inquit, *Israel, Dominus Deus tuus, Deus unus est* (*Deut.* vi, 4).

8. A Patre Spiritum sanctum mitti, Dominus in Evangelio loquitur dicens: *Paracletus Spiritus sanctus, quem mittet Pater in nomine meo, ille vos docebit omnia* (*Joan.* xiv, 26). Et quod mittatur a Filio, ipsa veritas dicit: *Cum*

of holy Athanasius to take away or add something concerning the Catholic faith; and so some of the Greeks boldly strive to reprehend the Romans because in the profession of holy faith they sing with heart and mouth to God: «Who proceeds from the Father and the Son,» although in the aforementioned councils it was stated: «Who proceeds from the Father,» and the Holy Roman Church approves and believes that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

5. If this abovementioned prohibition is considered subtly and rightly, all ambiguity will be removed; for when it prohibited one to add or take away something, it meant a different thing, with which opinion the following statement of the Apostle agrees: «If any man preaches any other thing to you besides that which you have received from us, let him be accursed» (Galatians 1, 9). And the Apostle John says: «If anyone comes to you, bringing another doctrine, do not receive him and do not greet him» (II John 1, 10). When he said «another doctrine», warning against heresy, without ambiguity he wished to point out to us the difference of doctrine.

6. Indeed, the apostles, martyrs, and orthodox teachers of the Church preached many other things; but as they are not contradictory, an apostolic prohibition of this kind is not considered to be contradictory because they are tending to one end of truth. Thus since it is known that the same judgment concerns similar things, it is clear and far from doubt that prohibitions of the aforesaid opinions should be accepted concerning the difference of heresies.

7. But let us show clearly by evidence of Holy Scripture that the Holy Spirit belongs to the Father and to the Son and is sent from the Father and from the Son and proceeds from both. The words of the Apostle are these: «If his spirit, which aroused Jesus from the dead, dwells in you,» etc. (Colossians 2, 12). And elsewhere: «God sent the spirit of his Son into our hearts» (Galatians 4, 6). And so, it is manifestly obvious by the words of the Apostle that the Holy Spirit belongs to God the Father raising from death, and to God the raised Son, who are not three gods. One is to be believed and worshipped, as Moses testifies: «Hear», he says, «O Israel, the Lord your God is one God» (Deuteronomy 6, 4).

8. The Lord says in the Gospel that the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father, saying: «The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things» (John 14, 26). And the same truth

venerit Paracletus, quem ego vobis mittam a Patre (*Joan.* xv, 26). His itaque plenarie declaratur, sancti Spiritus missionem a Patre esse, et a Filio. A Patre nempe Spiritus sanctus procedere ostenditur, cum dicitur: *Spiritus veritatis, qui a Patre procedit* (*Joan* xv, 26); a Filio vero, cum post resurrectionem suam insufflavit, et discipulis suis dixit: *Accipite Spiritum sanctum* (*Joan.* xx, 22).

9. Isaias etiam in persona Patris dicit: *Spiritus a facie mea egredietur* (*Isai.* lvii, 56). Dei Patris verbum, vel facies Unigenitus ejus est, homo enim per faciem a nobis agnoscitur, et Deus Pater per Filium innotuit mundo; unde Filius ait: *Pater, manifestavi nomen tuum hominibus, quos dedisti mihi* (*Joan.* xvii, 6). Et illud: *Notum feci eis nomen tuum, et notum faciam* (*Joan.* xvii, 26). Possumus ad hæc latius probanda plura inducere; sed forsitan, cui non sufficiunt ista, multa non proderunt ad salutem, quia *animalis homo non percipit ea quæ Dei Spiritus sunt* (*I Cor.* ii, 14), arbitrans esse stultitiam quæ dicuntur, et quia profecto hoc ex contemptu ignorantiæ provenit, ignorans ignorabitur.

10. Dum autem sanctæ Trinitatis personas loquendo distinguimus, summopere curemus ne individuam, ac simplicissimam essentiam unius Dei dividere videamur. Sed quid sit illud ineffabile Patris *generare,* illud etiam inæstimabile Filii *nasci, generari,* vel *exire;* atque illud incomprehensibile Spiritus sancti *a Patre et Filio mitti,* vel *procedere,* et cætera, quæ hujusmodi de personarum varietate dicuntur, si non capimus mente, capiamus fide, ut salvi esse perpetuo mereamur.

11. Ecce brevitate qua valui tuis inquisitionibus satisfeci. Sed quod subjecisti, habere te hæreticos, cum quibus assidue disputas, et quos ad fidem catholicam studes revocare, laudamus zelum, sed audaciam reprehendimus. Dicit namque Scriptura divina. *Qui tetigerit picem, inquinabitur ab ea (Eccli.* xiii, 1). Cave igitur, dilectissime fili, ut quia Deus triumphalibus trophæis armorum strenuitate prostratis inimicis te fecit victoriosum, hæreticis suasionibus ignominiose ne victus succumbas; te enim laborante eos ab errore mortis eruere, ipsi invigilant te in præcipitium erroris demergere, a quorum confabulatione vel solatio quemlibet Christicolam, tanquam a lethifero

says that he is sent by the Son: «When the Comforter comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father» (John 15, 26). Thus it is declared fully in these statements that the Holy Spirit is sent by the Father and by the Son. The Holy Spirit is certainly shown to come from the Father, when it is said: «The Spirit of truth, which proceeds from the Father» (John 15, 26); but from the Son, when he breathed after his resurrection and said to his disciples: «Receive the Holy Spirit» (John 20, 22).

9. Isaiah also says in the person of the Father: «The Spirit will depart from my countenance» (Isaiah 57, 56 [LXX]). The only-begotten is the word of God the Father and his face, for a man is recognized by us by his face, and God the Father was known to the world through his Son; whence the Son says: «Father, I have manifested your name to the men whom you gave to me» (John 17, 6). And this: «I have made known your name to them and I shall make it known» (John 17, 26). We can adduce more statements to prove these things more fully, but perhaps many examples will not benefit the salvation of one to whom these are not sufficient since «the natural man does not perceive those things which are of the Spirit of God» (I Corinthians 2, 14), thinking that what is said is stupid. Because this certainly results from contemptible ignorance, being ignorant, he will be ignored.

10. But when in speaking we distinguish the persons of the Holy Trinity, we should greatly take care that we do not appear to divide the individual and most simple essence of one God. But if we do not understand the meaning of that inexpressible «begetting» by the Father, that «birth», «being begotten», or «death» of the Son, which cannot be appraised, or that incomprehensible «being sent» or «procession» of the Holy Spirit «from the Father and the Son» and other things of this kind which are said about the difference of the persons, let us take them on faith so that we may deserve to be saved forever.

11. And so, with as much brevity as I could, I have answered your questions. But concerning your statement that you have heretics with whom you constantly disagree, and whom you desire to recall to the Catholic faith, I praise your zeal but reprehend your audacity. For the divine Scripture says: «Whoever has touched pitch will be defiled by it» (Ecclesiastes 13, 1). Thus beware, beloved son, lest because God has made you victorious with triumphal victories and strength of arms over fallen enemies, you succumb, conquered ignominiously by heretical persuasions; for while you labor to rescue them from the error of death, they themselves stay awake to submerge

veneno, sub obtestatione divini judicii præcipimus abstinere, nisi fuerit in divinis præceptis experientia operum probatus, et sacris eruditus Scripturis.

12. Testamur igitur coram Deo, monemus, et quidquid possumus, hortando præcipimus, ut quam citius eos, zelum Dei legis exercens, nisi catholicam professi fuerint veritatem, a te repellas, atque dicta eorum et objectiones nobis scribendo mittere non moreris. Deo teste fraternitatem dilectionis tuæ in visceribus Jesu Christi amplectimur charius; et singula, quantum Deus dederit, ad salutem animæ et tui corporis honestatem determinabimus, sacris ea fulciendo auctoritatibus, ut falsitas veritati cedat, et Ecclesiæ Christi gloria roboretur, et crescat. Memento communis nostri doctoris Leandri, et ejus fidem atque doctrinam pro viribus imitare, ut in præsenti bonis perfrui, et in futuro cœlestium bonorum participationem valeas adipisci. Amen. Ora pro me; donet Dominus ut animæ, corporis, fidei et honoris tibi servata integritate, merear te videre de cætero, mi Domine et charissime fili.

you in the abyss of error; from their conversation or solace I advice every Christian to abstain under the threat of divine judgment, as if from lethal poison, unless he is proven in divine precepts by experience of works and is erudite in the Holy Scriptures.

12. Thus I beseech in the presence of God, I advise, and as much as I can, I order and exhort that you drive them from yourself as quickly as possible, exercising the zeal of God's law, unless they have professed the Catholic truth, and that you do not delay to send in writing to me their words and objections. With God as a witness, I dearly embrace the fraternity of your beloved self in the bosom of Jesus Christ; and I shall indicate individual things, as far as God may grant it, for the salvation of your soul and the health of your body, supporting them with holy authorities, so that falsehood may yield to truth and the glory of the Church of Christ may be strengthened and grow. Remember our common teacher Leander, and imitate his faith and doctrine in accordance with your strength so that you may be able to enjoy good at the present and obtain a share of celestial goods in the future. Amen. Pray for me. May the Lord grant that wholeness of mind, body, faith, and honor may be preserved by you and that I may deserve to see you in the future, my lord and dearest son.

EPISTOLA VII.

ISIDORI REDEMPTO ARCHIDIACONO.

Dilecto filio in Christo Redempto archidiacono Isidorus.

1. Multis non modo ecclesiasticis, verum etiam hujus perituri regni præpeditus negotiis, prout optamus, tuæ charitatis quæstionibus ad præsens satisfacere non valemus. Verum, quia, impellente charitate, omnibus sumus debitores, ex parte qua valeo pareo dilectioni tuæ, ad inquisita compendiose respondere paratus. Innotuisti quippe nobis, in animo tibi versari scrupulum, eo quod orientalis Christi Ecclesia ex fermentato pane, occidentalis ex azymo sacratissimi corporis sacramentum conficere consuevit; et quia ipsi Orientales Latinos super hoc reprehendere non verentur, illud etiam animo tuo insedit, quod illi sericos pannos, nos autem lineos, quos *corporalia* dicimus, ad ornamenta tanti sacrificii exhibemus.

2. Scias itaque eorum jam dictis consuetudinibus minime nos opponere reprehensionis obstaculum, quandiu eas Romana Ecclesia duxerit tolerandas, maxime cum non sint de essentia, sive substantia sacramenti. De substantia sacramenti sunt verba Dei a sacerdote in sacro prolata ministerio, scilicet, *Hoc est corpus meum,* panisque frumenti et vinum, cui consuevit aqua adhiberi, quia utrumque de latere Christi, videlicet, sanguis et aqua profluxit. Cætera vero pertinent ad decorem sacramenti, futurorum exemplum, ad nostram et eorum humiliationem, atque in Dei laude exercitationem, et cum prædictorum facta fuerit consecratio, non, ut quidam putant indocti, sub panis specie sola caro Christi, et in calice tantummodo sumitur sanguis; sed in utroque Deus et homo, in corpore glorificato totus et integer Christus, integer Christus in calice, panis vivus, qui de cœlo descendit, totus est in utroque.

3. Ipse est panis qui reficit, non deficit; panis qui totus a singulis sumitur, et in nulla sui parte minuitur; visibilis angelis, fide non dubia creditur a nobis miraculose et invisibiliter totus in sumentibus singulis, et integra sui

LETTER VII

ISIDORE TO ARCHDEACON REDEMPTUS

Isidore to Archdeacon Redemptus, a beloved son in Christ.

1. Prevented not only by many ecclesiastical tasks but also by tasks of this kingdom which is about to perish, I cannot answer the questions of your beloved self at the present as I desire. But because we are debtors to all, love impelling us, I obey your beloved self to the extent that I can, prepared to respond briefly to your questions. Indeed you have made known to me that doubt is raised in your mind because the Eastern Church of Christ is accustomed to make the sacrament of the most sacred body from leavened bread, the Western Church from unleavened bread; and because the Easterners themselves are not afraid to reprehend the Romans about this, the fact also arose in your mind that they wear silken garments for ornaments of such a great sacrament, whereas we wear linen garments, which we call «bodily».

2. You should know that we by no means oppose an obstacle of reprehension to their already mentioned customs inasmuch as the Roman Church considers that they should be tolerated, especially since they are not of the essence or substance of the sacrament. Concerning the substance of the sacrament are the words of God uttered by the priest in the holy ministry, that is, «This is my body,» and the bread of grain and the wine, to which it has been the custom to add water because both, that is, blood and water, flowed from the side of Christ. But the other things belong to the glory of the sacrament, to the example of the future, to our and their humiliation, and to exercise in praise of God, and when a consecration of the aforesaid is made, the body of Christ is not taken alone, as some unlearned people think, under the appearance of bread nor is only blood taken in the cup; but God and man are in both; Christ is whole and entire in the glorified body; Christ is whole in the cup, the living bread, which descended from heaven, is whole in both.

3. He himself is the bread which revives us and is not wanting; the bread which is taken whole by individuals and is diminished in no part; visible to the angels, he is believed by us with undoubtful faith to be miracu-

essentia visibiliter totus semper regnat in cœlis; quia vero Orientales Romanorum, sive nostras consuetudines impudenter obtrectando reprehensionis abolitione impugnare nituntur, ad arma divini oraculi concurrentes nos, quantum potuerimus, easdem defendere veritate prævia insurgemus.

4. Dominus enim noster Jesus Christus, quando discipulis corporis sui mysterium agendum tradidit, non legitur accepisse panem fermentatum, vel azymum, sed accepit panem, et dedit discipulis suis, dicens: *Hoc est corpus meum; hoc facite, quotiescunque sumitis, in meam commemorationem* (*Luc.* xxii, 19). Legitur tamen præcepisse Dominum Moysi ut pascha cum azymis panibus et lactucis agrestibus manderetur, et apud quemcunque Hebræorum fermentatus panis per septem dies paschæ inveniri posset, occideretur (*Exod.* xii). Dominus igitur noster pascha secundum legem celebravit, et in cœna suum corpus sub panis et vini specie discipulis edendum tradidit, et eis eumdem conficiendi tradidit potestatem, atque panem azymum cum quo pascha agebatur obtulit.

5. Similiter sacratissimum corpus ejus non legitur pannis sericis, vel laneis, sed mundis linteaminibus in sepultura involutum fuisse. Ergo, cujus mysterium passionis et sepulturæ, eum quotidie immolando, geritur in altare, a tramite recto deviare non possunt, qui in pane azymo, vino et aqua, additis et mundis, sanctisque linteaminibus, secundum consuetudinem Ecclesiæ Romanæ corporis et sanguinis Domini sacrosanctum sacrificium student conficere. Videtur etiam Dominus nobis favere in Exodo dicens: *Non immolabis,* inquit, *super fermento sanguinem hostiæ meæ.*

6. Quod etiam de vase agitur ligneo fictili, vel metallino, quo agitur immolatio sacrificii, quia nullus evangelistarum expresse ostendit cujusmodi fuerit, ad legis videtur recurrendum potius auctoritatem, quia in ministerio tabernaculi, aut domus Dei nulla vasa sacræ unctionis oleo delibuta leguntur lignea, vel fictilia, sed magis ex metallo erant. Dominus etiam quæque de melioribus sibi offerri præcepit, et tabernaculum testimonii cum maxima diligentia auri et argenti mira pulchritudine adornare. De Salomonico templo quid? Re vera idem. Quod si cæremonialia illa, quæ umbra erant veritatis

lously and invisibly whole in individuals receiving him, and with his whole essence he visibly rules ever whole in heaven; but because the Easterners, by impudently maligning the customs of the Romans or our customs, strive to impugn us, unmindful of reprehension, we shall have recourse to the arms of the divine oracle and shall rise to defend them as much as we can with truth leading the way.

4. For it is not written that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he declared to his disciples that the mystery of his body should be celebrated, received leavened or unleavened bread, but he received some bread and gave it to his disciples, saying: «This is my body; do this as often as you take it in my remembrance» (Luke 22, 19). Yet it is written that the Lord prescribed to Moses that the Passover should be eaten with unleavened bread and wild lettuce and that if leavened bread might be found in the house of any of the Hebrews during the seven days of the Passover, he should be killed (Exodus 12). Thus our Lord celebrated the Passover according to the law, and at the Last Supper entrusted his body to his disciples to be eaten under the appearance of bread and wine and granted the same power of making bread to them, and offered the unleavened bread with which the Passover was celebrated.

5. Similarly, it is not written that his most sacred body was wrapped in burial with silken or woolen garments but with clean linen cloths. Thus they sacrifice daily the one the mystery of whose passion and burial takes place at the altar, and those cannot deviate from the right path who are zealous in making the sacrosanct sacrifice of the body and blood of the Lord with unleavened bread, wine, and water, clean and holy linen cloths being added, according to the custom of the Roman Church. For the Lord seems to favor us, saying in Exodus: «Thou shalt not offer,» he says, «the blood of my sacrifice with leavened bread» (Exodus 23, 18).

6. Concerning the wooden, earthen, or metal vessel, with which the offering of the sacrifice is made, since none of the evangelists expressly indicates of what kind it was, recourse must be had rather to the authority of law, because it is written that in the ministry of the tabernacle or the house of God no vessels besmeared with the oil of sacred unction were wooden or earthen but rather were of metal. The Lord also ordered that whatever vessels were best should be offered to him and that the tabernacle of testimony should be adorned with the wonderful beauty of gold and silver with

futuræ, quibus pecudum carnes immolabantur, vel sanguis, tanto voluit Deus decore perfrui, quanto magis sacrum altare, sanctumque vas, in quo ipsa veritas, scilicet unigenitus Deus, quotidie Deo Patri offertur, quanto honore, reverentia, gloria et decore debent studio et diligentia adornari!

7. Liquide patet tam inæstimabile sacrificium in vase luteo, vel ligneo, nisi necessitate urgente, vel cogente inopia, offerre turpe ac vile, præsumptuosum esse et temerarium, quod potest justo examine reprobari. Sed forsan objicis pannum sericum pretiosiorem esse lineo, et idcirco magis divinis usibus aptum. Ad quod nos in utroque Testamento dicimus candorem vestium maxime approbari, eo quod in eo mentis sinceritas requiratur, quam constat inter cæteras virtutes Deo esse gratiosiorem, ad quam pervenire cupienti charitati vestræ, ut pateat clarius, sacræ Scripturæ testimoniis ostendamus.

8. Dicit enim, omni tempore sint vestimenta tua candida, et Domini sacerdotes Ephod lineo excellentiæ causa erant superinduti. Evangelium etiam in transfiguratione Dominica, quod apparuerint vestimenta Domini tanquam nix, evidenter testatur; et in Apocalypsi, qui in conspectu Agni stabant, et qui sequuntur ipsum quocunque ierit, stolis albis perhibentur amicti, et quam plurima alia. Quis inter pannos mundus ut lineus, cui ex ablutione frequenti candor angetur, cum in sericis magis ex eadem offuscari videatur? Mentis autem munditiam nullatenus esse intelligas ubi infidel tas viget: non enim est conventio Christi ad Belial.

9. De incongruitate vero grammaticæ locutionis, quæ in Veteri Testamento reputatur, vel Novo, respondemus, verba cœlestis oraculi non subjacent Prisciani regulis, vel Donati, et quamvis sit analogia scienda, usus præ omnibus æmulandus est. Dummodo sententia a veritate non discrepet, et a sanctorum Patrum vestigiis nullatenus recedendum. Lucide habes, fili charissime, in quam partem tui animi intellectum debeas inclinare, atque tui cordis scrupulum super hoc omnino deponere. Diligenter per omnia inspice, et

very great dilligence. What of Solomon's temple? Truly the same is written. Concerning those ceremonies which were a shadow of future truth, with which the flesh or blood of cattle was offered, God wanted to enjoy great glory. With how much the more honor, reverence, glory, and grace the sacred altar and holy vessel, in which truth, that is, the only-begotten God, is daily offered to God the Father, ought to be adorned with eagerness and diligence!

7. It is manifestly clear that to offer such an invaluable sacrifice in an earthen or wooden vessel, unless necessity presses upon us or want compels us, is base and vile, presumptuous and rash because it can be reproved with just examination. But perhaps you may object that silken cloth is more precious than linen and thus more suited for divine uses. To this we say that in both Testaments the whiteness of garments is especially approved, since sincerity of mind is required by it, which, as is well known, is the most pleasing of all virtues to God. Let us show your eager beloved self how to reach this by testimony of sacred Scripture so that it may be clearer.

8. For he says, «let your garments always be white,» and the priests of the Lord were clothed in linen clothing for the sake of excellence. The Gospel also in the Lord's transfiguration manifestly testifies that the garments of the Lord appeared as snow; and in Revelation, those who stood in the sight of the Lamb and who follow him wherever he goes are said to be described as dressed in white garments; and many other things are written. Which among cloths is as pure as linen, to which whiteness is increased by frequent washing, whereas with silken cloths the whiteness seems to be more darkened from washing? You should understand that purity of mind is nowhere where infidelity flourishes. For there is no agreement of Christ with Belial.

9. But concerning the disagreement of grammatical expression which is found in the Old and New Testaments, we reply that the words of the heavenly oracle do not obey the rules of Priscian or of Donatus, and although analogy should be known, usage must be emulated above all things. Provided the judgment does not depart from truth, there must by no means be a departure from the examples of the holy fathers. You know clearly, dearest son, where you should direct the understanding of your mind and set aside completely the anxiety of your heart concerning this. Consider everything carefully, and you will find that the customs of the Holy Roman Church

reperies sanctæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ consuetudines a divinis auctoritatibus in nullo aliquatenus deviare. Pro me ad Dominum orare, quæso digneris.

do not differ at all from the divine authorities. I ask that you deign to pray to the Lord for me.

EPISTOLA VIII.

ISIDORI EUGENIO EPISCOPO.

Domino charissimo et virtutibus inclyto Eugenio episcopo Isidorus.

1. Vestræ sanctitatis litteras per nuntium suscipiens Verecundum, rerum omnium Conditori grates impendimus, quod Ecclesiæ sanctæ suæ mentis et corporis vestri valetudinem conservare dignatur; atque ad inquisita pro modulo parati satisfacere, exoramus orationum vestrarum suffragiis ab ærumnis opprimentibus a Domino sublevari. Verum quod in quibusdam quæstionibus venerabilis vestra fraternitas, licet vos non ignoremus peritos, me compulit respondere, majoris sententiæ innodatio, nisi ex dispensationis articulo a minori nequaquam valeat enodari, sed potius ab inferiori prolata, a superiore jure mediante cassetur. Orthodoxi quidem Patres Spiritus sancti auctoritate prævia sanxerunt; aliter autem quolibet astruente, sicut est vestræ prudentiæ cognitum, pravum suborietur, scilicet gloriatio securis contra eum qui secat in eam (*Isai.* x, 15).

2. Quod vero de parilitate agitur apostolorum, Petrus præeminet cæteris, quia a Domino audire meruit: *Tu vocaberis Cephas, tu es Petrus* (*Joan.* i, 42), et cætera, et non ab alio aliquo, sed ab ipso Dei et virginis filio honorem pontificatus in Christi Ecclesia primus suscepit. Cui etiam post resurrectionem Filii Dei ab eodem dictum est: *Pasce agnos meos* (*Joan.* xxi, 15), agnorum nomine Ecclesiarum prælatos notans. Cujus dignitas potestatis etsi ad omnes catholicarum episcopos est transfusa, specialius tamen Romano antistiti singulari quodam privilegio, velut capiti, cæteris membris celsior permanet in æternum.

3. Qui igitur debitam ei non exhibet reverenter obedientiam, a capite sejunctus, Acephalorum schismati se reddit obnoxium, quod sicut illud sancti Athanasii de fide sanctæ Trinitatis sancta Ecclesia approbat, et custodit, quasi sit fidei catholicæ articulus: *Quod nisi quisque fideliter firmiterque*

LETTER VIII

ISIDORE TO BISHOP EUGENIUS

Isidore to Bishop Eugenius, dearest lord renowned for virtues.

1. Receiving through a venerable messenger the letter of your Holiness, I pay thanks to the Creator of all things that he deigns to preserve for his Holy Church the health of your mind and body; and being prepared to answer your questions to some extent, I pray that you be relieved by the Lord from oppressing difficulties through favorable hearings of your prayers. But as for what your venerable fraternity compelled me to answer with regard to certain questions, although I know that you are learned, the connection of major opinion can in no way be disconnected from minor opinion except by an article of dispensation; rather an opinion resulting from an inferior law is nullified by a superior law intervening. Indeed the orthodox fathers sanctioned previous matters with the authority of the Holy Spirit; but when someone adds something else, as is known by your wisdom, evil will arise, that is, the boasting of the ax against him who cuts with it (Isaiah 10, 15).

2. But concerning the question of the equality of the apostles, Peter takes precedence over the others because he deserved to hear from the Lord: «You will be called Cephas; you are Peter» (John 1, 42) and other things; and he first received in the Church of Christ the honor of the priesthood not from any other but from the very Son of God and the Virgin. It was said to him even after the resurrection of the Son of God by the same: «Feed my lambs» (John 21, 15). Christ designated the prelates of the churches by the name of lambs. Although his dignity of power is transferred to all Catholic bishops, yet in a special way and with a singular privilege it remains forever higher to the bishop of Rome as the head than to all the other members.

3. Thus whoever, separated from the head, does not reverently exhibit the due obedience to him, renders himself subject to the schism of the Acephali, inasmuch as the Holy Church approves and defends the following statement of holy Athanasius concerning the belief in the Holy Trinity, as if it were an article of the Catholic faith: «Unless everyone believes this faithfully and

crediderit, salvus esse non poterit. Hæc vestræ dulcissimæ charitati breviter prælibavi, considerans illud philosophi pauca sufficere sapienti.

firmly, he will not be able to be saved.» I briefly mentioned this to your very sweet charity, considering the saying of the philosopher that only few things are sufficient for a wise man.

EPISTOLA IX.

ISIDORI BRAULIONI EPISCOPO.

Domino meo et Dei servo, Braulioni episcopo, Isidorus.

1. Omni desiderio desideravi nunc videre faciem tuam, et utinam aliquando impleret Deus votum meum, antequam moriar. Ad præsens autem deprecor ut commendes me Deo orationibus tuis, et, ut in hac vita spem meam impleat, et in futura beatitudinis tuæ consortium mihi concedat. *Et manu sua.* Ora pro nobis, beatissime domine et frater.

LETTER IX

ISIDORE TO BISHOP BRAULIO

Isidore to Bishop Braulio, my lord and the servant of God.

1. With all longing I have desired to see your face, and I wish that God would fulfill my prayer some time before I die. At the present, however, I pray that you may commend me to God in your prayers so that both in this life he may fulfill my hope and in the future may grant to me the fellowship of your blessedness. With my own hand: Pray for me, very blessed lord and brother.

EPISTOLA X.

BRAULIONIS EPISCOPI ISIDORO.

Domino meo et vere domino, Christique electo, Isidoro, episcoporum summo, Braulio servus inutilis sanctorum Dei.

1. O pie domine, et virorum præstantissime, sera est inquisitio et tarde data mihi scribendi optio, quia peccatis meis ingruentibus non modo sterilitatis vel inopiæ malo, verum etiam luis et hostilitatis, quominus inquirerem, horribili sum præpeditus incursu.

2. Nunc autem etsi mille necessitatibus, mille curis attritus, post longum miseriæ tempus, veluti ab improbi soporis, ut ita dixerim, gravedine suscitatus, istius meæ suggestionis affatibus dependere præsumo salutis obsequium, et cordis et corporis humilitate prostratus, imprecans excellentissimam tuæ beatitudinis potestatem, ut peculiarem famulum, quem pio illo sacræ dignationis intuitu semper habuisti susceptum, usque in finem habere jubeas commendatum.

3. Nam et ego (Christus novit) gravi dolore discrucior, quod, emenso tempore tam prolixo, vel nunc vestrum non mereor videre conspectum, sed spero in illum qui non obliviscitur misereri, nec repellit in finem, quia exaudiet precem pauperis, et vestro me miserum repræsentabit aspectui. Suggero sane, et omnimoda supplicatione deposco, ut librum Etymologiarum, quem jam, favente Domino, audivimus consummatum, promissionis vestræ memores, servo vestro dirigere jubeatis, quia, ut mihi sum conscius, magna ibi ex parte servi tui postulatione sudasti. Et ideo in me primum existe munificus; sic in sanctorum cœtibus et felix habearis, et primus.

4. Gesta etiam synodi, in qua Sintharius examinis vestri igni etsi non purificatus, invenitur tamen decoctus, quæso ut vestro instinctu a filio vestro domino rege nobis dirigantur cito. Nam et nostra ejus sic flagitavit gloriam suggestio, quia multum in concilio pro investiganda opus est veritate. De cætero Creatoris altissimi pietatem efflagito, ut coronam beatitudinis vestræ pro integritate fidei et statu Ecclesiæ suæ longo tempore præcipiat conservare, meque inter oblatrantia præsentis mundi varia et innumerabilia dis-

LETTER X

BISHOP BRAULIO TO ISIDORE

Braulio a useless servant of the holy men of God, to Isidore, supreme bishop, my lord and truly my lord, and a man chosen by Christ.

1. O pious lord and most excellent man, late is the inquiry and tardily given to me is the desire of writing because with my sins attacking me, not only with the misfortune of sterility or of want but also of pestilence and of hostility, I am hindered from inquiry by a horrible attack.

2. Now although worn out by a thousand needs and a thousand cares after a long period of misery, as if aroused from the heaviness of bad sleep, so to speak, I presume that the service of health depends upon the utterances of my suggestion. I am prostrate with humility both of heart and of body, imploring the most excellent power of your blessedness to bid that a special servant whom you have always received with your dutiful regard of sacred dignity be commended to the end.

3. For I, as Christ knows, am tortured with severe pain because I do not even get to see your face now after such a long period has passed. But I trust in him, who does not forget to pity and does not repel me to the end since he will listen to the prayer of a poor man and will represent me in my wretchedness to your face. I suggest certainly and ask with every kind of supplication that you, mindful of your promise, bid that the book of *Etymologiae,* which I have heard is now finished with the Lord's favor, be sent to your servant because, as I am aware, you sweated on it in great part at the request of your servant. And thus be kind toward me first; may you thus be considered in the assemblies of the holy both fortunate and first.

4. I request also that the records of the proceedings of the synod, in which Sintharius is found boiled, although not purified by the fire of your examination, be sent to me soon by reason of the suggestion of your son, a lord and king. For my suggestion thus summoned his glory because there is much need in the council for investigating the truth. Moreover, I pray to the piety of the highest Creator that he bid that the crown of your blessedness be preserved for a long time for the integrity of faith and

crimina munitum reddat tuæ intercessionis gratia, ac, reconditum in gremium memoriæ tuæ, tutum ab omni tempestate peccati oratu vestro efficiat Trinitas sacratissima. *Et manu sua.* Ego servus Domini Braulio Isidoro: in Domino fruar te, lucerna ardens, et non marcescens!

stability of his Church, and that he return me strengthened amid the varied and innumerable railing crises of the present world, thanks to your intercession, and that the most Holy Trinity by your prayer may restore me to the bosom of your memory, safe from every storm of sin. With my own hand: I, Braulio, a servant of the Lord, to Isidore: May I enjoy your presence in the Lord, O burning and unwaning lamp!

EPISTOLA XI.

ISIDORI BRAULIONI EPISCOPO.

Domino meo, et Dei servo Braulioni episcopo Isidorus.

1. Quia te incolumem cognovi, gratias Christo egi; et utinam cujus cognovi salutem in hoc corpore aspicerem et visionem! Quid autem mihi evenit pro peccatis meis, manifestabo, quia non fui dignus tua perlegere eloquia; statim ut accepi pittatium tuum, puer regius ad me venit; dedi cubiculario meo illud pittatium et confestim ambulavi ad principem, ut postea perlegerem et rescriberem.

2. Reversus e palatio regis, non solum scripta tua non inveni, sed etiam quidquid aliud in chartis fuit periit. Et idcirco, scit Dominus, luxi meritum meum, quia non perlegi eloquium tuum, sed rogo ut quæcunque occasio venerit, rescribe mihi. Et gratiam verbi tui non auferas, ut quod ex meo delicto perdidi, iterum gratia tua recipiam. *Et manu sua.* Ora pro nobis, beatissime domine.

LETTER XI

ISIDORE TO BISHOP BRAULIO

Isidore to Bishop Braulio, my lord and the servant of God.

1. Because I learned that you were well I gave thanks to Christ. I wish that I might also behold in person the sight of the one whose health I learned about! I shall reveal what has happened to me on account of my sins because I was not worthy of reading your letter. As soon as I received your letter, a royal page came to me. I gave the letter to my chamber servant so that I might read it and reply to it later, and immediately went to the king.

2. Returning from the palace of the king, not only did I not find your letter, but also whatever else was in the tablets was lost. Therefore, as the Lord knows, I mourned my misfortune because I did not read your letter. But I ask that whenever an opportunity comes, you reply to me. And do not remove the grace of your word so that by your grace I may receive again what I lost through my own fault. Written in my own hand: Pray for me, very blessed lord.

EPISTOLA XII.

BRAULIONIS EPISCOPI ISIDORO.

Domino meo et vere domino, Christique electo, Isidoro episcoporum summo, Braulio servus inutilis sanctorum Dei.

1. Solet repleri lætitia homo interior ac spiritualis, cum inquisitione fungitur amantis. Ob id velle meum est, mi domine reverentissime, nisi culparum maceria mearum obsistat, et benigne te inquisitionem meam amplecti, et querelarum calumniam patienter accipere. Utrumque enim ago, et officium inquisitionis persolvo, et tibi contra te causarum mearum necessitates dirigo, quod ut benignissime tuo auditui admittas, in ingressu hujus dictationis portaque prostratus, peto a culmine vestri apostolatus; et quanquam vacillet calumniæ objectio, ubi lacrymarum est intercessio, cum lacrymæ non sint signa calumniæ, tamen sint, opto, et lacrymabiles calumniæ, et calumniabiles lacrymæ. Sed utrumque pro licentiosa amoris præsumptione, non autem pro arrogantiæ temeritate. Sed jam causam exordiar.

2. Septimum, ni fallor, annum tempora gyrant ex quo me memini libros a te conditos Originum postulasse, et vario diversoque modo præsentem vos me frustratum esse, et absenti nihil inde vos rescripsisse, sed subtili dilatione modo necdum esse perfectos, modo necdum scriptos, modo meas litteras intercidisse, aliaque multa opponentes, ad hanc usque diem pervenimus, et sine petitionis effectu manemus. Ob hoc et ego vertam preces in querelam, ut quod supplicatione nequivi, vel calumnia lacessendo valeam adipisci. Sæpe namque solet mendico prodesse vociferatio.

3. Quocirca cur, quæso te, mi domine, non tribuas quod rogaris? Unum scias, non dimittam, quasi fingens me nolle negata. Sed quæram, et instanter quæram, quousque autem accipiam, aut eliciam, piissimo Redemptore jubente: *Quærite, et invenietis, et adjiciente: pulsate, et aperietur vobis (Luc.* xi, 9). Quæsivi, et quæro, etiam pulso. Unde et clamito, ut aperias. Nam hujus argumenti me consolatur inventio, quia qui contempsisti postulantem, exaudies forte calumniantem.

LETTER XII

BISHOP BRAULIO TO ISIDORE

Braulio, a useless servant of the holy men of God, to Isidore, supreme bishop, my lord and truly my lord, a man chosen by Christ.

1. An inward and spiritual man is wont to be filled with joy when he responds to the inquiry of a loved one. Concerning this it is my wish, my most revered lord, that you receive my inquiry kindly and receive patiently the insult of complaints unless the wall of my sins stands in the way. For I do both: I both carry out the duty of inquiry and I direct toward you the needs of my business with you, and in order that you might admit it most kindly to your hearing, I, prostrate at the entrance and gate of this letter, make my request from the summit of your episcopal dignity; and although the objection of insult totters when there is a shedding of tears, since tears are not signs of insult, nevertheless, I wish that there be both tearful insults and insulting tears—both for the unrestrained presumption of love, but not for temerity of arrogance. But now I shall begin my business.

2. The seventh year, if I mistake not, has passed since the time when I recall that I asked you for the books of *Origines* put together by you and you in a varied and diverse way frustrated me in person; you then replied nothing to me in my absence but with subtle delay alleged now that they were not yet finished, now that they were not written, now that my letter was lost and many other things. I have now come to this day and remain without success in my request. Therefore, I shall turn my request to complaint so that I may obtain even by insult and attack what I could not obtain by entreaty. For often an outcry is wont to benefit a beggar.

3. Why, I ask, my lord, do you not give what you are asked for? You should know one thing: I shall not dismiss it as if imagining that I do not want what has been denied me, but I shall ask and ask pressingly until I receive or obtain it at the bidding of the most pious Redeemer, who says, «Seek and you shall find» and adds, «Knock and it will be opened unto you» (Luke 11, 9). I sought and I seek, I even knock. Therefore, I also shout for you to open. For the discovery of this argument consoles me because you who despised my request perhaps may listen to my insult.

4. Hinc et ego scienti tua ingero, nec styli jactatione novi aliquid suggerere insipiens perfecto præsumo. Nec tamen erubesco imperitus disertissimo loqui, apostolici memor præcepti, quo præciperis libenter sufferre insipientem. Quamobrem accipe clamores calumniæ. Cur rogo talentorum distributionem et cibariorum dispensationem tibi creditam hucusque retentas? Jam solve manum, impertire familiis, ne inopia pereant famis. Nosti quid creditor veniens reposcat a te. Non minuetur tibi quidquid dederis nobis. Memor esto parvis panibus multitudinem satiatam, et superasse reliquias fragmentorum magnitudine panum.

5. An putas donum tibi collatum pro te solummodo esse datum? Et vestrum est, et nostrum commune est, non privatum. Et quis dicere vel insanus præsumat, ut privato tuo gaudeas, qui de communi tantum inculpabiliter gaudere scias? Nam cum Deus tibi œconomiam sui thesauri et divitiarum, salutis, sapientiæ et scientiæ tenere concesserit, cur larga manu non effundis quod dando non minues? An cum in membris superni capitis unusquisque quod non accepit sic in altero possideat, ut alteri quod habet possidendum sciat, tu forsitan ideo nobis parcus existis, quia quod mutuo a nobis resumas non invenis?

6. Sed si habenti das, tantillæ mercedis fructum reportas. Sin vero non habenti tribuis, præceptis evangelicis satisfacis, ut reddatur tibi in retributione justorum. Proinde et ego remordeor conscientia, eo quod in me communicabile nihil boni sentiam, quoniam jubemur per charitatem servire invicem, et unusquisque quam accepit gratiam in alterum illam administrare, sicut boni dispensatores multiformis gratiæ Dei (*I Petri* iv, 10); atque unicuique, sicut divisit Deus mensuram fidei, in unam compagem membrorum debeat eam cæteris partibus communicare, quia hæc omnia operatur unus, atque idem spiritus dividens singulis prout vult (*Rom.* xii, 3).

7. Sed ad unum ac peculiare subsidium quod præmisi recurro, ad importunitatem scilicet amicam amicitia destitutis, ac nulla membrorum honestorum gratia decoratis. Idcirco audi vocem meam tot interjacentibus terris. Redde,

4. Hence I declare your business to you who know it, nor do I presume foolishly to suggest something new with boasting of language. Nevertheless, I do not blush because, though unskilled, I speak to a most eloquent man, being mindful of the apostle's precept whereby you are ordered to endure a foolish man gladly. Therefore, receive the shouts of insult. Why, I ask, do you still hold back the distribution of talents and the dispensation of foods granted to you? Now free your hand, give to the servants lest they perish from the want of hunger. You know what a coming creditor asks of you. Whatever you give me will not be a loss to you. Be mindful that the multitude is sated with small loaves and that the remains of the pieces are left over because of the size of the loaves.

5. Do you think that a gift conferred on you was given for you alone? It is both yours and mine; it is common, not private. And who, even if he is insane, would dare to say that you who know how to rejoice with such impunity in public property, rejoice in your private property? For although God allowed you to have a supply of his treasure and riches, of health, wisdom, and knowledge, why do you not pour out with an abundant hand what you will not lessen by giving? When each one among the members of the supreme head thus possesses in another's hands that which he did not himself receive so that he knows that what he has should be possessed by another, do you perchance remain stingy to me because you do not know what you may receive from me in return?

6. But if you give to one who has, you get back the fruit of such a small reward. But if you give to one who does not have, you satisfy the precepts of the Gospel that it should be returned to you in the retribution of just men. Therefore, I grieve in my conscience because I feel that I possess no good which I can share since we are ordered to serve each other through love and everyone is ordered to administer that grace which he received to another, as good dispensers of the varied grace of God (I Peter 4, 10); and just as God distributed a measure of faith to each one among a group of members, he should give this to all the other parts since one and the same Spirit does all these things, distributing to individuals as he wishes (Romans 12, 3).

7. But I return to the one and special aid which I mentioned at first, that is, you deprive me of friendship with a friendly rudeness and honor none of the honest members with grace. Thus hear my voice though so

redde quod debes. Nam servus, servus es Christi et Christianorum, ut illic sis major omnium nostrum, et quia nostri causa tibi collatam præsentis gratiam, sitientibus animis scientiæque fame cruciatis impertiri non dedigneris.

8. Non sum saltem pes, qui ad injuncta discurrens possim alvo ecclesiæ, membrorum scilicet judici, obedientiæ discursu parere, nec principatui capitis imperanti obsequendo placere. Quin etsi de inhonestioribus membris me esse sciam, sufficiat, quia quæ te constat a capite percepisse, per me est dignum egerere, nec te me non egerere, quamvis minimum, Christi tamen sanguine redemptum. Nam nec dicit caput pedibus: Non estis mihi necessarii, quoniam quæ videntur membra corporis infirmiora esse, necessariora sunt; et quæ putantur ignobiliora esse, his honorem abundantiorem circumdamus; et quæ inhonestiora sunt nostra, majorem honestatem habent.

9. Sic itaque creator noster ac dispensator cuncta dispensat, ut cum in altero alteri dona divina, quæ in se non percipit, possidenda tribuuntur, charitas cumuletur. Denique tum bene multiformis gratia dispensatur, quando acceptum donum et eis qui hoc non habent creditur, quando propter eum cui impenditur datum putatur. Hoc Apostoli capitulum a nobis in parte præmissum optime novit prudentia charitatis vestræ huic rei congruere totum; et quidquid summatim tetigi, te procul dubio nosse melius, latet nullum.

10. Itaque hoc solum superest, quod et magnopere peto, ut præstes postulata, etsi non pro me, saltem pro ipsa charitate divinitus impertita. Pro qua jubemur et nosse et præstare omnia, et sine qua nihil sunt omnia. Sed et si qua superflua, si qua negligenter, si qua minus humiliter, aut inutiliter potius effudi quam dixi, cuncta, quæso, benigne suscipias, cuncta ignoscas, cuncta ores, ut Deus ignoscat. Ergo et hoc notesco, libros Etymologiarum, quos a te domino meo posco, etsi detruncatos corrososque, jam a multis haberi.

11. Inde rogo ut eos mihi transcriptos integros, emendatos et bene coaptatos digneris mittere, ne raptus aviditate in perversum cogar vitia pro virtutibus ab aliis sumere. Ego autem opto, quamvis nullius egeas, et ultroneæ

many lands lie between: Pay back, pay back what you owe, for you are a servant, a servant of Christ and of Christians, so that you may be greater than all of us therein and because you do not deign for the sake of us present to bestow upon minds thirsting and tortured with hunger for knowledge the grace granted to you.

8. I am at least not a foot which can run at commands and obey the stomach of the Church, namely, the judge of members, with the discourse of obedience, nor can please the ordering principate of the head by flattery. Although I know that I am among the more unworthy members, let it be enough that you do not expel me, being insignificant, yet redeemed with the blood of Christ, because what you, as is well known, perceived from the head is worthy for me to carry out. For the head does not say to the feet: you are not necessary to me, since what appear to be the weaker limbs of the body are more necessary; and what are thought to be more lowly, we surround with more abundant honor; and those that are our more dishonorable limbs have the greater honor.

9. Thus our Creator and Dispenser dispenses everything so that when divine gifts in one person, which he does not perceive in himself, are given as possessions to another, charity will be accumulated. Indeed, varied grace is dispensed well when a gift is believed acceptable to those who do not have it and is thought given on account of him on whom it is bestowed. The prudence of your charity best knows how to add to this thing that whole chapter of the apostle mentioned by me in part; and whatever I touched upon summarily, it escapes no one that you undoubtedly know it better.

10. Therefore, this alone, which I desire greatly, remains, that you furnish what I have asked for, even if not provided for me, at least divinely for charity itself. According to this we are bidden to know and to furnish everything, and without this everything is nothing. But if I have poured out rather than said everything superfluously, neglectfully, not humbly, or uselessly, I beg that you receive everything kindly and excuse everything and pray that God may excuse everything. Therefore, I make known that the books of *Etymologiae* which I ask from you, my lord, although destroyed and mutilated, are now possessed by many.

11. Thus I ask that you deign to send them to me transcribed, entire, corrected, and well integrated lest, carried by eagerness into wrong, I be compelled to take vices instead of virtues from others. Moreover, I wish,

dicuntur putere mercedes, ut dignatio vestræ benignitatis imperet nobis in id quod possumus et valemus, tantum ut obsequio nostro utaris, imo charitate, quæ Deus est, perfruaris.

12. His igitur expletis, erunt mihi quæstiones de sacris divinisque paginis, quarum mihi expositionem cordis vestri lumen aperiret, si tamen et nobis jubes resplendere, et divinæ legis obscura reserare. Nec si ista quæ peto percepero, de illis silebo, sed viam reseras capiendæ fiduciæ. Cum in hac prima fronte non me confoderis stimulis verecundiæ, et ignaviæ meæ, locum dederis veniæ, quod quem diligebas, quamlibet immeritum, non jusseris reprobare, quia ignominiosum valde videtur, ac vile, si necdum satiatus quis charitate ab eo quem amabat invenitur secedere.

13. Obsequio autem meæ servitutis dependo jura salutis, et quæso pietatem sanctissimæ vestræ potestatis, ut pro me orare digneris; quatenus quotidie fluctuantem animam in malis tuo intercessu lucreris, et ad portum tranquillitatis æternæ deducas, erutam a miseriis et a scandalis. Dulce mihi fuit diu ad te loqui, quasi coram positus vultum viderem tuæ faciei. Ideo nec verbositatem cavi, et temeritatem fortassis incurri. Sed aut hoc aut aliud agere debui, tantum ut quod noluisti per humilitatem saltem tribuas per tumultuantem improbitatem.

14. Ecce quantum audaciæ dedit mihi gratia vestræ benevolentiæ. Et ideo si quid in hoc displicuerit, sibi imputet, quæ tantum amat, ut timorem tollat. Nam perfecta charitas foras mittit timorem. Speciali quoque gratia fretus speciali domino, in quo vires sanctæ Ecclesiæ consistunt, suggero ut, quia Eusebius noster metropolitanus decessit, habeas misericordiæ curam. Et hoc filio tuo nostro domino suggeras, ut utilem illi loco præficiat, cujus doctrina et sanctitas cæteris sit vitæ forma. Hunc autem filium præsentem beatissimæ potestati vestræ per omnia commendo, et tam de his quæ hic suggessimus, quam etiam de his quæ supra questi sumus, eloquio vestro per eum illustrari mereamur.

although you lack nothing and voluntary gifts are said to stink, that the dignity of your benignity command me to do that which I can, that you make use of my subservience and indeed enjoy the charity which is God.

12. These matters having been finished, I shall have questions about sacred and divine pages whose exposition the light of your heart might open to me, if you bid it to shine for me and to unlock the obscurities of divine law. If I receive what I seek, I shall not be silent about it; but you open a way of getting hope. When you do not pierce me on my forehead with the goads of my shame and cowardice, you give place to pardon because you do not order that one whom you loved, although undeserving, be reproached; because it seems very ignominious and vile if someone not yet sated with charity is found to withdraw from him whom he loved.

13. I hang the rights of health on the obedience of my servitude and I ask the piety of your most holy power to deign to pray for me, that you daily mourn with your intercession a fluctuating soul in misfortunes and lead it to the harbor of eternal tranquility, freed from miseries and from scandals. It has been pleasant for me to speak to you for a long time, as if placed in your presence I saw the countenance of your face. Therefore, I did not beware of verbosity and perhaps incurred temerity. But I should have done either this or something else so that you may grant at least through tumultuous wickedness what you would not grant through humility.

14. Look how much audacity the grace of your benevolence gave me. And thus if anything in this is displeasing, let one consider what he loves so that he may remove fear. For perfect charity drives fear away. Relying on a special lord with a special grace, in whom is the strength of the Holy Church, I suggest that you have concern for mercy because Eusebius, our metropolitan, has died. And you should suggest this to your son, our lord, that he put in that place a useful person whose doctrine and sanctity is the model of life for all others. I commend in everything this present son to your most blessed power, and concerning both the things which I suggested here and those about which I complained above, I deserve to be illumined by him with your letter.

EPISTOLA XIII.

ISIDORI BRAULIONI EPISCOPO.

Domino meo et Dei servo Braulioni episcopo Isidorus.

1. Tuæ sanctitatis epistolæ me in urbe Toletana invenerunt. Nam permotus fueram causa concilii. Sed quamvis jussio principis in itinere positum remeare me admonuisset, ego tamen, quia propinquior eram præsentiæ ipsius quam regressioni, malui potius cursum itineris non intercludere. Veni ad præsentiam principis, inveni præsentem diaconum tuum; per eum eloquia tua suscipiens, amplexus sum, et legi, et de salute tua Deo gratias egi, desiderio omni desiderans, quamvis debilis atque fessus, fiduciam tamen habens per Christum in hac vita videndi te, quia spes non confunditur per charitatem, quæ diffusa est in cordibus nostris.

2. Codicem Etymologiarum cum aliis Codicibus de itinere transmisi, et licet inemendatum præ invalitudine, tamen tibi modo ad emendandum statueram offerre, si ad destinatum concilii locum pervenissem. De constituendo autem episcopo Tarraconensi non eam quam petisti sensi sententiam regis; sed tamen et ipse adhuc ubi certius convertat animum, illi manet incertum. Peto autem ut pro meis peccatis apud Dominum existere digneris intercessor, ut impetratu tuo deleantur delicta mea, et remittantur facinora. *Item manu sua.* Ora pro nobis, beatissime domine, et egregie frater.

LETTER XIII

ISIDORE TO BISHOP BRAULIO

Isidore to Bishop Braulio, my lord and the servant of God.

1. The letter of your Holiness reached me in the city of Toledo. For I had gone there on account of the council. But although the order of the king advised me to return after I had set out on my journey, I preferred not to stop the course of my journey because I was nearer to his presence than to home. I came to the king's presence. I found your deacon present. Receiving your letter from him, I took it and read it and gave thanks to God for your health, longing with every desire to see you in this life, although weak and weary, yet having hope through Christ, because hope is not confounded by charity which is diffused in our hearts.

2. While on the journey, I sent you the manuscript of the *Etymologiae* along with other manuscripts, and although it was not corrected because of my ill health, I decided to present it to you for correcting if I came to the destined place for the council. Concerning the establishment of the bishop of Tarragona, I realized that the opinion of the king was not what you desired, but he himself still remains uncertain when he might be certain. I ask that you deign to be an intercessor for my sins with the Lord so that by your entreaty my faults may be obliterated and my sins forgiven. And written in my own hand: Pray for me, very blessed lord and distinguished brother.

EPISTOLA XIV.

DOMINO ET FILIO SISEBUTO ISIDORUS.

En tibi, sicut pollicitus sum, misi opus de origine quarundam rerum ex veteris lectionis recordatione collectum atque ita in quibusdam locis adnotatum, sicut extat conscriptum stilo maiorum.

LETTER XIV

ISIDORE TO SISEBUTUS

Isidore to Sisebutus, my lord and son.

1. Here now, just as I promised, I have sent to you a work about the origin of certain things collected from remembrance of old reading and so annotated in certain places as it was written by the stylus of the ancients.